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SUBJECT: FM OF CHAD'S DOHA MEETING WITH SE GRATION

KEY POINTS:

-- Chadian FM Fekki told Special Envoy for Sudan Gration April 29 that Chad has lost confidence in Sudan's willingness to live up to its commitments and welcomes the international community's intervention as guarantors.

-- Fekki agreed with SE Gration's approach to reducing violence, but stopped short of promising Chad's help, as SE Gration had requested, to encourage Khalil Ibrahim to travel to Doha in early May for more mediation.

-- The FM encouraged SE Gration to raise the issue directly with President Deby. He also noted that Chad had agreed to facilitate SE Gration's meeting in Chad with Ibrahim.

-- Fekki said President Deby of Chad is pragmatic, like SE Gration, and would pressure Ibrahim if convinced it is the right thing to do.

End Key Points.

¶1. (SBU) Chadian FM Moussa Fekki outlined for Special Envoy for Sudan Scott Gration April 29 the deterioration in relations between Chad and Sudan, starting about 2002. He noted early efforts by Chad and President Deby in 2002-04 to stop the conflict in Darfur and keep it from spreading into a regional war. Particularly bothersome to Chad was Sudan's attempt to overthrow the Chadian regime while refugees were on the move to Chad's eastern border. In contrast to the previous era, when Fekki said Sudan and Chad enjoyed good relations, Sudan now accuses Chad, he said, of sponsoring attacks.

¶2. (SBU) Fekki said Chadians see themselves as victims. They do not consider Sudanese-sponsored attacks in border areas against Chad - carried out by armed groups living on the Sudanese side of the border - in the same league as "unrealistic" Sudanese accusations of Chadian sponsorship of attacks deep into the interior of Sudan.

¶3. (SBU) The merits of the issues aside, Fekki told SE Gration, who was accompanied by Ambassador, S/USSES Deputy to SE Gration Tim Shortley and P/E Chief Rice, that Chad has "lost confidence in Sudan" and the latter party's "desire and capacity to implement the many agreements" that both countries have signed in recent years. In Chad's view, Sudan has not fulfilled its obligations.

¶4. (SBU) Only through efforts of the international community, acting as guarantors, could confidence between Sudan and Chad be re-established and bilateral relations improved, said Fekki. In this vein, Chad very much welcomes U.S. efforts to reduce tensions with Sudan.

¶5. (SBU) SE Gration expressed his support for Libyan and Qatri efforts to mediate the disputes between Sudan and Chad and said the U.S. would be as supportive as possible in reducing the violence along the border. Noting his scheduled meeting with President Deby in the coming days, SE Gration asked the FM for Chad's support in bringing Khalil Ibrahim of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) to Doha May 3-4 for discussions that would lead to an interim cease-fire, especially along the border, and help create space for resolving the bilateral and Darfur-centered disputes.

¶ 6. (SBU) FM Fekki stopped short of supporting Ibrahim's travel to Doha in early May. Fekki did state, however, that Ndjamena would facilitate Ibrahim's arrival in the capital for his meeting with Gration. He nonetheless agreed with SE Gration's approach and encouraged him to take up the subject of Ibrahim directly with President Deby. Noting SE Gration's plan was realistic and Deby is pragmatic and not an ideologue, Fekki observed that Deby would exert the pressure on Ibrahim once he was convinced it is the right approach.

¶ 7. (SBU) Fekki observed that President Deby and SE Gration share a history of flying airplanes and are both practical men. Fekki closed the meeting by telling SE Gration his bigger challenge will be dealing with the ideological elements in Sudan.

¶ 8. (U) SE Gration has cleared this message.

LEBARON